

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Acting Secretary of Education Announces Flexible Instructional Days Pilot Program for Pennsylvania Schools

Harrisburg – Acting Secretary of Education Carolyn Dumaresh today announced that a Flexible Instructional Days pilot program is available to schools across the commonwealth.

Flexible Instructional Days offer schools the ability to use non-traditional educational delivery methods on regularly scheduled school days in which circumstances, such as inclement weather, necessitate an alternate approach.
The program is effective in the current school year.

"As we continue to advance through the twenty-first century, our education system is adapting to and actively using technology for the delivery of instruction and educational materials," Dumaresh said. "The Flexible Instructional Days program offers schools the option to deliver instruction through the use of digital technology when students are prevented from physically being in the classroom."

The Public School Code requires schools to offer at least 180 days or 900 hours of instruction to grades 1-6 or 990 hours of instruction for grades 7-12. This flexibility provides schools with the opportunity to meet these requirements through the use of digital resources.

For Flexible Instructional Days to be considered a school day and count toward the number of days or hours required under the Public School Code, schools must submit to the Department of Education a summary of their program that demonstrates the school has addressed the overall management of the program, curriculum and instruction, and student and teacher access to technology and supports.

Schools electing to offer Flexible Instructional Days may create a program that is online, offline or a combination of the two. However, if the program consists of elements that rely on public broadcast or Internet options, comparable alternatives must be made available to students and teachers unable to access the resources due to a lack of power, technology or connectivity.

In choosing to implement Flexible Instructional Days, a school must identify strategies for complying with the Free and Appropriate Public Education requirements under the federal Individual with Disabilities in Education Act, including the delivery of services as well as provisions for any missed services.

Flexible Instructional Days may be used at any time during the school year, but the cumulative number in a single school year may not exceed five without a school first soliciting and receiving approval from the Department of Education.

"This is an important program that will provide maximum flexibility for schools to leverage digital resources to maintain the continuity of instruction," Dumaresh said. "For the past several months, the department has engaged with schools across the state to obtain their

feedback and suggestions in creating this policy, and I want to thank each of them for their input and advice."

For guidelines and additional information about this program, visit www.education.state.pa.us and click on the "Flexible Instructional Days Pilot Program" graphic.

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- See more at:

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=7234&PageID=1005857&mode=2&contentid=http://pubcontent.state.pa.us/publishedcontent/publish/cop_hhs/pde/single_web/no_workflow_required/news_and_media/articles/acting_secretary_of_education_announces_flexible_instructional_days_pilot_program_for_pennsylvania_schools.html#sthash.xCIT468R.dpuf